CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG ON PEOPLE'S WAR

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

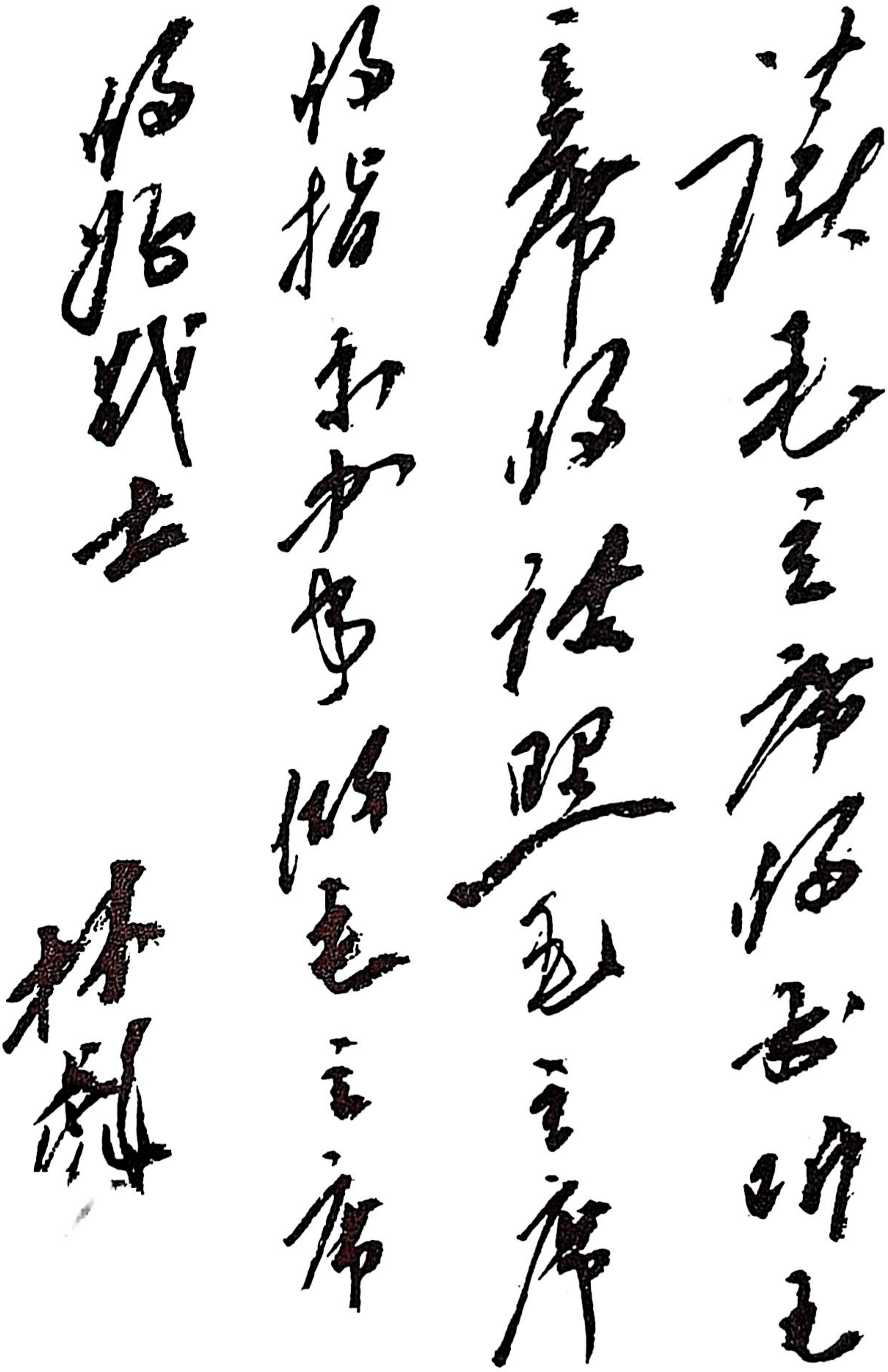
CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG ON PEOPLE'S WAR

★

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS
PEKING 1967

First Edition 1967

Printed in the People's Republic of China



Study Chairman Mao's writings, follow his teachings, act according to his instructions and be his good fighters.

Lin Piao

A facsimile of the above statement by Comrade Lin Piao in his own handwriting appears on the previous page.

CONTENTS

Revolutions and Revolutionary Wars Are Inevitable in Class Society 1

Political Power Grows Out of the Barrel of a Gun 3

Imperialism and All Reactionaries Are Paper Tigers 6

People, Not Things, Are the Factor Determining Victory or Defeat in War 11

Revolutionary War Is a War of the Masses 14

Establish Rural Bases and Use the Villages to Surround the Cities 18

The People's Liberation Army Is an Armed Body for Carrying Out the Political Tasks of Revolution 23

The Strategy and Tactics of People's War 29

Our Chief Method Is to Learn Warfare Through Warfare 37

Editorial Note by *Hongqi*, *Renmin Ribao* and *Jiefangjun Bao* 42

The page number given for the source of a quotation refers to the first English edition of the book or pamphlet cited as published by the Foreign Languages Press, Peking.

In cases where a word or phrase linked to the preceding text has been omitted in the opening sentence of the quotation, an asterisk is placed after the source. This is also done in a number of places where the English rendering has been reworded to make up for omission of context or to improve the translation.

Translator

REVOLUTIONS AND REVOLUTIONARY WARS ARE INEVITABLE IN CLASS SOCIETY

War is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions, when they have developed to a certain stage, between classes, nations, states, or political groups, and it has existed ever since the emergence of private property and of classes.

"Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" (December 1936), *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 180.

Revolutions and revolutionary wars are inevitable in class society, and without

them it is impossible to accomplish any leap in social development and to overthrow the reactionary ruling classes and therefore impossible for the people to win political power.

"On Contradiction" (August 1937), *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 344.*

History shows that wars are divided into two kinds, just and unjust. All wars that are progressive are just, and all wars that impede progress are unjust. We Communists oppose all unjust wars that impede progress, but we do not oppose progressive, just wars. Not only do we Communists not oppose just wars, we actively participate in them.

"On Protracted War" (May 1938), *Selected Works,* Vol. II, p. 150.

War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will be finally eliminated

by the progress of human society, and in the not too distant future too. But there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to oppose war with war, to oppose counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war, to oppose national counter-revolutionary war with national revolutionary war, and to oppose counter-revolutionary class war with revolutionary class war.

"Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" (December 1936), *Selected Works,* Vol. I, pp. 182-83.

POLITICAL POWER GROWS OUT OF THE BARREL OF A GUN

The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of

revolution. This Marxist-Leninist principle of revolution holds good universally, for China and for all other countries.

"Problems of War and Strategy" (November 6, 1938), *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 219.

Every Communist must grasp the truth, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."

Ibid., p. 224.

According to the Marxist theory of the state, the army is the chief component of state power. Whoever wants to seize and retain state power must have a strong army. Some people ridicule us as advocates of the "omnipotence of war". Yes, we are advocates of the omnipotence of revolutionary war; that is good, not bad, it is Marxist. The guns of the Russian Communist Party created socialism. We shall create a democratic

republic. Experience in the class struggle in the era of imperialism teaches us that it is only by the power of the gun that the working class and the labouring masses can defeat the armed bourgeoisie and landlords; in this sense we may say that only with guns can the whole world be transformed.

Ibid., p. 225.

Without armed struggle neither the proletariat, nor the people, nor the Communist Party would have any standing at all in China and it would be impossible for the revolution to triumph. In these years [the eighteen years since the founding of the Party] the development, consolidation and bolshevization of our Party have proceeded in the midst of revolutionary wars; without armed struggle the Communist Party would assuredly not be what it is today. Comrades throughout

the Party must never forget this experience for which we have paid in blood.

"Introducing *The Communist*" (October 4, 1939), *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 292.*

IMPERIALISM AND ALL REACTIONARIES ARE PAPER TIGERS

All reactionaries are paper tigers. In appearance, the reactionaries are terrifying, but in reality they are not so powerful. From a long-term point of view, it is not the reactionaries but the people who are really powerful.

"Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong" (August 1946), *Selected Works*, Vol. IV, p. 100.

Just as there is not a single thing in the world without a dual nature (this is

the law of the unity of opposites), so imperialism and all reactionaries have a dual nature — they are real tigers and paper tigers at the same time. In past history, before they won state power and for some time afterwards, the slave-owning class, the feudal landlord class and the bourgeoisie were vigorous, revolutionary and progressive; they were real tigers. But with the lapse of time, because their opposites — the slave class, the peasant class and the proletariat — grew in strength step by step, struggled against them more and more fiercely, these ruling classes changed step by step into the reverse, changed into reactionaries, changed into backward people, changed into paper tigers. And eventually they were overthrown, or will be overthrown, by the people. The reactionary, backward, decaying classes retained this dual nature even in their last life-

and-death struggles against the people. On the one hand, they were real tigers; they devoured people, devoured people by the millions and tens of millions. The cause of the people's struggle went through a period of difficulties and hardships, and along the path there were many twists and turns. To destroy the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism in China took the Chinese people more than a hundred years and cost them tens of millions of lives before the victory in 1949. Look! Were these not living tigers, iron tigers, real tigers? But in the end they changed into paper tigers, dead tigers, bean-curd tigers. These are historical facts. Have people not seen or heard about these facts? There have indeed been thousands and tens of thousands of them! Thousands and tens of thousands! Hence, imperialism and all reactionaries, looked

at in essence, from a long-term point of view, from a strategic point of view, must be seen for what they are — paper tigers. On this we should build our strategic thinking. On the other hand, they are also living tigers, iron tigers, real tigers which can devour people. On this we should build our tactical thinking.

Speech at the Wuchang Meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (December 1, 1958), quoted in the explanatory note to "Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong", *Selected Works,* Vol. IV, pp. 98-99.*

Make trouble, fail, make trouble again, fail again . . . till their doom; that is the logic of the imperialists and all reactionaries the world over in dealing with the people's cause, and they will never go against this logic. This is a Marxist

law. When we say "imperialism is ferocious", we mean that its nature will never change, that the imperialists will never lay down their butcher knives, that they will never become Buddhas, till their doom.

Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fight again . . . till their victory; that is the logic of the people, and they too will never go against this logic. This is another Marxist law. The Russian people's revolution followed this law, and so has the Chinese people's revolution.

"Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle" (August 14, 1949), *Selected Works,* Vol. IV, p. 428.

People of the world, unite and defeat the U.S. aggressors and all their running dogs! People of the world, be courageous, dare to fight, defy difficulties and advance wave upon wave. Then the

whole world will belong to the people. Monsters of all kinds shall be destroyed.

"Statement Supporting the People of the Congo (L.) Against U.S. Aggression" (November 28, 1964), *People of the World, Unite and Defeat the U.S. Aggressors and All Their Lackeys,* 2nd ed., p. 14.

PEOPLE, NOT THINGS, ARE THE FACTOR DETERMINING VICTORY OR DEFEAT IN WAR

The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history.

"On Coalition Government" (April 24, 1945), *Selected Works,* Vol. III, p. 257.*

Weapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor; it is people, not things, that are decisive. The contest of strength is not only a contest of military and economic power, but also a contest of human power and morale. Military and economic power is necessarily wielded by people.

"On Protracted War" (May 1938), *Selected Works,* Vol. II, pp. 143-44.

The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people. It is mainly because of the unorganized state of the Chinese masses that Japan dares to bully us. When this defect is remedied, then the Japanese aggressor, like a mad bull crashing into a ring of flames, will be surrounded by hundreds of millions of our people standing upright, the mere sound of their voices will

strike terror into him, and he will be burned to death.

Ibid., p. 186

Take the case of China. We have only millet plus rifles to rely on, but history will finally prove that our millet plus rifles is more powerful than Chiang Kai-shek's aeroplanes plus tanks. Although the Chinese people still face many difficulties and will long suffer hardships from the joint attacks of U.S. imperialism and the Chinese reactionaries, the day will come when these reactionaries are defeated and we are victorious. The reason is simply this: the reactionaries represent reaction, we represent progress.

"Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong" (August 1946), *Selected Works,* Vol. IV, p. 101.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR IS A WAR OF THE MASSES

The revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them.

"Be Concerned with the Well-being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods of Work" (January 27, 1934), *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 147.*

What is a true bastion of iron? It is the masses, the millions upon millions of people who genuinely and sincerely support the revolution. That is the real iron bastion which it is impossible, and absolutely impossible, for any force on earth to smash. The counter-revolution cannot smash us; on the contrary, we shall smash it. Rallying millions upon millions of people round the revolutionary government and expanding our revolutionary war, we shall wipe out all counter-revolution and take over the whole of China.

Ibid., p. 150.*

Considering the revolutionary war as a whole, the operations of the people's guerrillas and those of the main forces of the Red Army complement each other like a man's right arm and left arm, and if we had only the main forces of the Red Army without the people's guerrillas, we would be like a warrior with only one arm.

"Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" (December 1936), *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 238.

This army is powerful because it has the people's self-defence corps and the militia — the vast armed organizations of the masses — fighting in co-ordination with it. In the Liberated Areas of China all men and women, from youth to middle

age, are organized in the people's anti-Japanese self-defence corps on a voluntary and democratic basis and without giving up their work in production. The cream of the self-defence corps, except for those who join the army or the guerrilla units, is brought into the militia. Without the co-operation of these armed forces of the masses it would be impossible to defeat the enemy.

"On Coalition Government" (April 24, 1945), *Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 265.*

This army is powerful because of its division into two parts, the main forces and the regional forces, with the former available for operations in any region whenever necessary and the latter concentrating on defending their own localities and attacking the enemy there in co-operation with the local militia and the self-defence corps. This division of labour has won the whole-hearted support

of the people. Without this correct division of labour — if, for example, attention were paid only to the role of the main forces while that of the regional forces were neglected — it would likewise be impossible to defeat the enemy in the conditions obtaining in China's Liberated Areas. Under the regional forces, numerous armed working teams have been organized, which are well trained and hence better qualified for military, political and mass work; they penetrate into the rearmost areas behind the enemy lines, strike at the enemy and arouse the masses to anti-Japanese struggle, thus giving support to the frontal military operations of the various Liberated Areas. In all this they have achieved great success.

Ibid., pp. 265-66.*

The imperialists are bullying us in such a way that we will have to deal with

them seriously. Not only must we have a powerful regular army, we must also organize contingents of the people's militia on a big scale. This will make it difficult for the imperialists to move a single inch in our country in the event of invasion.

Interview with a Hsinhua News Agency correspondent (September 29, 1958).

ESTABLISH RURAL BASES AND USE THE VILLAGES TO SURROUND THE CITIES

Armed struggle by the Chinese Communist Party takes the form of peasant war under proletarian leadership.

"Introducing *The Communist*" (October 4, 1939), *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 291.

The anti-Japanese war is essentially a peasant war.

"On New Democracy" (January 1940), *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 366.

Since China's key cities have long been occupied by the powerful imperialists and their reactionary Chinese allies, it is imperative for the revolutionary ranks to turn the backward villages into advanced, consolidated base areas, into great military, political, economic and cultural bastions of the revolution from which to fight their vicious enemies who are using the cities for attacks on the rural districts, and in this way gradually to achieve the complete victory of the revolution through protracted fighting; it is imperative for them to do so if they do not wish to compromise with imperialism and its lackeys but are determined to fight on, and if

they intend to build up and temper their forces, and avoid decisive battles with a powerful enemy while their own strength is inadequate.

"The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party" (December 1939), *Selected Works,* Vol. II, pp. 316-17.

What, then, are these base areas? They are the strategic bases on which the guerrilla forces rely in performing their strategic tasks and achieving the object of preserving and expanding themselves and destroying and driving out the enemy. Without such strategic bases, there will be nothing to depend on in carrying out any of our strategic tasks or achieving the aim of the war.

"Problems of Strategy in Guerrilla War Against Japan" (May 1938), *Selected Works,* Vol. II, p. 93.

The protracted revolutionary struggle in the revolutionary base areas consists mainly in peasant guerrilla warfare led by the Chinese Communist Party. Therefore, it is wrong to ignore the necessity of using rural districts as revolutionary base areas, to neglect painstaking work among the peasants, and to neglect guerrilla warfare.

"The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party" (December 1939), *Selected Works,* Vol. II, p. 317.*

And stressing the work in the rural base areas does not mean abandoning our work in the cities and in the other vast rural areas which are still under the enemy's rule; on the contrary, without the work in the cities and in these other rural

areas, our own rural base areas would be isolated and the revolution would suffer defeat. Moreover, the final objective of the revolution is the capture of the cities, the enemy's main bases, and this objective cannot be achieved without adequate work in the cities.

Ibid.

From 1927 to the present the centre of gravity of our work has been in the villages — gathering strength in the villages, using the villages in order to surround the cities and then taking the cities.

"Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China" (March 5, 1949), *Selected Works*, Vol. IV, p. 363.

THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY IS AN ARMED BODY FOR CARRYING OUT THE POLITICAL TASKS OF REVOLUTION

Without a people's army the people have nothing.

"On Coalition Government" (April 24, 1945), *Selected Works*, Vol. III, pp. 296-97.

Our principle is that the Party commands the gun, and the gun must never be allowed to command the Party.

"Problems of War and Strategy" (November 6, 1938), *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 224.

This army is powerful because all its members have a conscious discipline; they

have come together and they fight not for the private interests of a few individuals or a narrow clique, but for the interests of the broad masses and of the whole nation. The sole purpose of this army is to stand firmly with the Chinese people and to serve them whole-heartedly.

"On Coalition Government" (April 24, 1945), *Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 264.*

The Chinese Red Army is an armed body for carrying out the political tasks of the revolution. Especially at present, the Red Army should certainly not confine itself to fighting; besides fighting to destroy the enemy's military strength, it should shoulder such important tasks as doing propaganda among the masses, organizing the masses, arming them, helping them to establish revolutionary political power and setting up Party organizations.

The Red Army fights not merely for the sake of fighting but in order to conduct propaganda among the masses, organize them, arm them, and help them to establish revolutionary political power. Without these objectives, fighting loses its meaning and the Red Army loses the reason for its existence.

"On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party" (December 1929), *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 106.*

Another highly significant and distinctive feature of the Eighth Route Army is its political work, which is guided by three basic principles. First, the principle of unity between officers and men, which means eradicating feudal practices in the army, prohibiting beating and abuse, building up a conscious discipline, and sharing weal and woe — as a result of which the entire army is closely united.

Second, the principle of unity between the army and the people, which means maintaining a discipline that forbids the slightest violation of the people's interests, conducting propaganda among the masses, organizing and arming them, lightening their economic burdens and suppressing the traitors and collaborators who do harm to the army and the people — as a result of which the army is closely united with the people and welcomed everywhere. Third, the principle of disintegrating the enemy troops and giving lenient treatment to prisoners of war. Our victory depends not only upon our military operations but also upon the disintegration of the enemy troops.

"Interview with the British Journalist James Bertram" (October 25, 1937), *Selected Works,* Vol. II, p. 53.*

The People's Liberation Army is always a fighting force. Even after country-wide victory, our army will remain a fighting force during the historical period in which classes have not been abolished in our country and the imperialist system still exists in the world. On this point there should be no misunderstanding or wavering.

"Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China" (March 5, 1949), *Selected Works,* Vol. IV, p. 362.

The People's Liberation Army should be a great school. In this school, our army should study politics and military affairs, raise its educational level, and also engage in agriculture and side-occupations and run small or medium-sized factories

to make products for its own needs or for exchange with the state against equal values. Our army should also do mass work and participate in the socialist education movement in the factories and the villages. When the socialist education movement is over, it will always find mass work to do so as to be always at one with the masses. Also our army should always be ready to participate in the struggles to criticize and repudiate the bourgeoisie in the cultural revolution. In this way, the army can concurrently engage in study, agriculture, industry and mass work. Of course, these tasks should be properly co-ordinated and a distinction should be made between the primary and secondary tasks. Each army unit should concurrently engage in one or two of the three tasks of agriculture, industry and mass work, but not in all three. Our

army of several million will play a very great role in this way.

"Letter to Comrade Lin Piao", quoted from *Renmin Ribao* editorial, August 1, 1966, "The Whole Country Should Become a Great School of Mao Tse-tung's Thought".

THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF PEOPLE'S WAR

You fight in your way and we fight in ours; we fight when we can win and move away when we can't.

Quoted from Comrade Lin Piao's article *Long Live the Victory of People's War!* (September 1965), p. 36.

NOTE:

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has provided a masterly summary of the strategy and

...ople's war: You fight in your way and we fight in ours; we fight when we can win and move away when we can't.

In other words, you rely on modern weapons and we rely on highly conscious revolutionary people; you give full play to your superiority and we give full play to ours; you have your way of fighting and we have ours. When you want to fight us, we don't let you and you can't even find us. But when we want to fight you, we make sure that you can't get away and we hit you squarely on the chin and wipe you out. When we are able to wipe you out, we do so with a vengeance; when we can't, we see to it that you don't wipe us out. It is opportunism if one won't fight when one can win. It is adventurism if one insists on fighting when one can't win. Fighting is the pivot of all our strategy and tactics. It is because of the necessity of fighting that we admit the necessity of moving away. The sole purpose of moving away is to fight and bring about the final and complete destruction of the enemy. This strategy and these tactics can be applied only when one relies on the broad masses of the people, and such application brings the superiority of people's war into full play. However superior he may be in technical equipment and whatever tricks he may resort to, the enemy will find himself in the passive position of having to receive blows, and the initiative will always be in our hands.

Lin Piao: *Long Live the Victory of People's War!* (September 1965), pp. 36-37.

Our strategy is "pit one against ten" and our tactics are "pit ten against one" — this is one of our fundamental principles for gaining mastery over the enemy.

"Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" (December 1936), *Selected Works,* Vol. I, p. 237.

Ours are guerrilla tactics. They consist mainly of the following points:

"Divide our forces to arouse the masses, concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy."

"The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue."

"To extend stable base areas, employ the policy of advancing in waves; when pursued by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of circling around."

"Arouse the largest numbers of the masses in the shortest possible time and by the best possible methods."

These tactics are just like casting a net; at any moment we should be able to cast it or draw it in. We cast it wide to win over the masses and draw it in to deal with the enemy.

"A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire" (January 5, 1930), *Selected Works,* Vol. I, p. 124.

Our principles of operation are:

(1) Attack dispersed, isolated enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces later.

(2) Take small and medium cities and extensive rural areas first; take big cities later.

(3) Make wiping out the enemy's effective strength our main objective; do not make holding or seizing a city or place our main objective. Holding or seizing a city or place is the outcome of wiping out the enemy's effective strength, and often a city or place can be held or seized for good only after it has changed hands a number of times.

(4) In every battle, concentrate an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), encircle the enemy forces completely, strive to

wipe them out thoroughly and do not let any escape from the net. In special circumstances, use the method of dealing the enemy crushing blows, that is, concentrate all our strength to make a frontal attack and an attack on one or both of his flanks, with the aim of wiping out one part and routing another so that our army can swiftly move its troops to smash other enemy forces. Strive to avoid battles of attrition in which we lose more than we gain or only break even. In this way, although inferior as a whole (in terms of numbers), we shall be absolutely superior in every part and every specific campaign, and this ensures victory in the campaign. As time goes on, we shall become superior as a whole and eventually wipe out all the enemy.

(5) Fight no battle unprepared, fight no battle you are not sure of

winning; make every effort to be well prepared for each battle, make every effort to ensure victory in the given set of conditions as between the enemy and ourselves.

(6) Give full play to our style of fighting — courage in battle, no fear of sacrifice, no fear of fatigue, and continuous fighting (that is, fighting successive battles in a short time without rest).

(7) Strive to wipe out the enemy when he is on the move. At the same time, pay attention to the tactics of positional attack and capture enemy fortified points and cities.

(8) With regard to attacking cities, resolutely seize all enemy fortified points and cities which are weakly defended. At opportune moments, seize all enemy fortified points and cities defended with moderate strength,

provided circumstances permit. As for all strongly defended enemy fortified points and cities, wait till conditions are ripe and then take them.

(9) Replenish our strength with all the arms and most of the personnel captured from the enemy. Our army's main sources of manpower and *matériel* are at the front.

(10) Make good use of the intervals between campaigns to rest, train and consolidate our troops. Periods of rest, training and consolidation should not in general be very long, and the enemy should so far as possible be permitted no breathing space.

These are the main methods the People's Liberation Army has employed in defeating Chiang Kai-shek. They are the result of the tempering of the People's Liberation Army in long years of fighting against domestic and foreign enemies and are

completely suited to our present situation. . . . our strategy and tactics are based on a people's war; no army opposed to the people can use our strategy and tactics.

"The Present Situation and Our Tasks" (December 25, 1947), *Selected Military Writings*, 2nd ed., pp. 349-50.*

OUR CHIEF METHOD IS TO LEARN WARFARE THROUGH WARFARE

The laws of war are a problem which anyone directing a war must study and solve.

The laws of revolutionary war are a problem which anyone directing a revolutionary war must study and solve.

The laws of China's revolutionary war are a problem which anyone directing

China's revolutionary war must study and solve.

We are now engaged in a war; our war is a revolutionary war; and our revolutionary war is being waged in this semi-colonial and semi-feudal country of China. Therefore, we must study not only the laws of war in general, but the specific laws of revolutionary war, and the even more specific laws of revolutionary war in China.

It is well known that when you do anything, unless you understand its actual circumstances, its nature and its relations to other things, you will not know the laws governing it, or know how to do it, or be able to do it well.

"Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" (December 1936), *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 179.

A commander's correct dispositions stem from his correct decisions, his correct decisions stem from his correct judgements, and his correct judgements stem from a thorough and necessary reconnaissance and from pondering on and piecing together the data of various kinds gathered through reconnaissance. He applies all possible and necessary methods of reconnaissance, and ponders on the information gathered about the enemy's situation, discarding the dross and selecting the essential, eliminating the false and retaining the true, proceeding from the one to the other and from the outside to the inside; then, he takes the conditions on his own side into account, and makes a study of both sides and their interrelations, thereby forming his judgements, making up his mind and working out his plans. Such is the complete process of knowing a situation which a military man

goes through before he formulates a strategic plan, a campaign plan or a battle plan.

Ibid., p. 188.

Unquestionably, victory or defeat in war is determined mainly by the military, political, economic and natural conditions on both sides. But not by these alone. It is also determined by each side's subjective ability in directing the war. In his endeavour to win a war, a military strategist cannot overstep the limitations imposed by the material conditions; within these limitations, however, he can and must strive for victory. The stage of action for a military strategist is built upon objective material conditions, but on that stage he can direct the performance of many a drama, full of sound and colour, power and grandeur.

Ibid., pp. 190-91.*

Reading is learning, but applying is also learning and the more important kind of learning at that. Our chief method is to learn warfare through warfare. A person who has had no opportunity to go to school can also learn warfare — he can learn through fighting in war. A revolutionary war is a mass undertaking; it is often not a matter of first learning and then doing, but of doing and then learning, for doing is itself learning.

Ibid., pp. 189-90.

EDITORIAL NOTE BY *HONGQI*, *RENMIN RIBAO* AND *JIEFANG-JUN BAO*:

We are publishing quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung on people's war to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

Chairman Mao's theory of people's war is an important constituent of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, the Marxism-Leninism of the present era.

In our era the thought of Mao Tse-tung is the compass for all oppressed peoples and nations in their struggles for liberation. It is most important to arm ourselves with Comrade Mao Tse-tung's theory of people's war and to use the gun to smash the old state apparatus, overthrow imperialism and its running dogs and transform the whole world.

After the proletariat has taken political power, the struggle continues throughout the historical period of socialism between the proletariat endeavouring to consolidate its dictatorship and the bourgeoisie endeavouring to overthrow it. Invariably, in its attempts to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat, the bourgeoisie desperately tries to get hold of the gun through its representatives within the Communist Party. In the Soviet Union, the Khrushchov revisionist clique usurped military power and staged a counter-revolutionary coup d'etat. This is a grave lesson for us. In China, in order to restore capitalism, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road colluded with the big conspirators,

careerists and warlords Peng Teh-huai and Lo Jui-ching for seventeen years in desperate plots to usurp the leadership of the army, vainly attempting to turn our people's army into their tool for counter-revolutionary restoration. The imperialists, headed by the United States, are attempting to invade and subvert socialist countries. Therefore, the revolutionary people of the socialist countries must conscientiously study Chairman Mao's theory of people's war and get a good grasp of this weapon, the sharpest of ideological weapons for smashing the schemes for capitalist restoration and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat. They must always be on guard against armed aggression by imperialism and its accomplices, must ensure that the gun is firmly in the hands of the proletariat and prevent the revisionists from usurping military power and changing the nature of the proletarian army.

This is the crucial factor for preventing the restoration of capitalism.

Armed with the thought of Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese People's Liberation Army is fulfilling its great role as the pillar of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the unprecedented great proletarian cultural revolution and is making new contributions; at the same time, it has been educated, tempered and tested anew in the storms of this revolution. The participation of the Chinese People's Liberation Army in the great proletarian cultural revolution in society at large is the latest development in the theory of our supreme commander Chairman Mao on building a proletarian revolutionary army.

Today, it is of vital significance for the whole Party, army and people to restudy Chairman Mao's theory of people's war.

毛主席论人民战争

*

外文出版社出版（北京）
1967年第一版
编号：（英）1050—713
00023
1—E—852Pc